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REPORT

SUBJECT Czechoslovak and East German
Border Information

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Czechoslovak and

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REPORT

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CZECHOSLOVAK AND EAST GERMAN BORDER INFORMATION (C)

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CZECHOSLOVAK AND EAST GERMAN BORDER INFORMATION (C)

Introduction

This report contains information on the Czechoslovak and East German border area from ČESKÝ JIŘETÍN to MARIENSKO.

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Listed are the names, geographical and UTM coordinates of locations used throughout this report. Coordinates are not shown for well-known locations.

Locations	Geographic	UTM
ADOLFOV	N50-44, E13-54	VS-2221
BOHOSUDOV	N50-41, E13-52	VS-2115
CINWALD	N50-44, E13-46	VS-1420
ČESKÝ JIŘETÍN	N50-42, E13-34	US-9819
DEČÍN	N50-46, E14-12	VS-4425
PLAŽE	N50-41, E13-37	VS0215
POJTOVICE	N50-43, E13-51	VS-1919
FRANTIŠKOVY LAZNE	N50-07, E12-22	US-1093
HABARTICE	N49-24, E13-24	VS-2019
MARIENSKO	N50-52, E14-14	VS-4736
MARIANSKÉ LAZNE	N49-58, E12-42	US-3638
MAXICKY	N50-49, E14-11	VS-4230
MOLDAVA	N50-43, E13-39	VS-0620
PETROVICE	N50-56, E14-41	VS-2829
PODMOKLY	N50-45, E14-12	VS-4325
RAJEC	N50-17, E12-43	VS-2039
SCHONWALD	N50-21, E13-00	VS-2325
SNĚŽNÍK	N50-47, E14-06	VS-3527
TEPLICE	N50-38, E13-50	VS-1711
TISA	N50-47, E14-02	VS-3226
UNČÍN	N50-41, E13-54	VS-2216

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1. Background

Before World War II, the population of the areas described in this report was 90 percent German. After World War II, the majority of these people were moved out and their property confiscated by the state. This confiscated property then was given to the agricultural and industrial workers that were brought in from other parts of Czechoslovakia. In 1948, when the Communists came into power, this property was again confiscated and became state-owned or collective farms (Jednoté zemědělské Družstvo - JZD). The Party leaders believed that the collective farms would produce more products than the privately owned farms; however, the farmers felt they were underpaid, and they began to quit the farms for better paying jobs in industry. Since the farms did not belong to them, the workers had no qualms about leaving. When the shortage of farm labor became acute, the Czechoslovak government brought in people from Hungary and Bulgaria to resettle the land, but even these people began quitting after a short period either to go to work in industry or to return home. This continuous procession of foreign workers to farm the land made the Czechoslovak government realize that something had to be done to settle the land on a more permanent basis.

The Czechoslovak and East German governments were negotiating for the return of the former occupants (the original Germans) of this land. These occupants were to be permanently resettled, or allowed to work in Czechoslovakia and return to their homes in East Germany each day. For those East Germans living near the border who wished to work in Czechoslovakia, work passes would be issued. Also the restrictions on passes, of 1 or 2 days duration, for visiting relatives or friends in Czechoslovakia was to be relaxed. All this was to alleviate the manpower shortage and increase agricultural and industrial output.

The Czechoslovak government had a long-range program to improve economic conditions in the Usti and Karlovy Vary regions by inducing people from other parts of Czechoslovakia to settle in these regions. (The border area described in this report was a portion of the Usti region.) Agriculture and forestry had been badly neglected in the past years and greater efforts were to be made to rectify this negligence. The mining of coal and uranium was to be increased and modernized. The health resorts of MARIANSKÁ LÁZNĚ and FRANTIŠKOVÁ LÁZNĚ were scheduled for new construction and remodeling in order to restore the tourist trade which the Czechoslovak spas had before World War II.

2. Restricted Zone

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This restricted zone extended from ČESKÝ JIRÁK to HRANŠKO and varied in depth from 100 m to 1000 m, depending in most cases on the roads, paths or streams parallel to the geographic border. It was easily recognized by many signs, posted along these routes, painted white with black letters and placed on poles 50 to 150 cm high, depending on the terrain. They had the following inscription: "Pozor Zakazane Pasma Vstup Zakazan" (Attention Restricted Zone Entry Forbidden). Anyone entering this zone accidentally was warned by the border guards in the towers to return to the unrestricted area. There were no other control measures taken by the border guards during daylight hours.

toward evening greater activity was shown by the border guards. They were seen patrolling parallel to the restricted zone and along the plowed strips between the towers and along the roads. Occasionally they were

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accompanied by dogs. This area was formerly inhabited by Czechs of German origin, but after World War II they were ordered to move out and people from other parts of Czechoslovakia were resettled here. Most of the new settlers were farmers and woodcutters from Slovakia, and some gypsies. The majority of the buildings had been razed; the few buildings remaining were used by the border guards and new settlers.

3. Observation Towers

These were wooden towers about 15 m high, which gave an unobstructed view of the border and surrounding areas. Two or three guards equipped with rifles or submachineguns and binoculars occupied each tower. [redacted] wires leading to the towers [redacted] were for telephone or other means of communication. 50X1-HUM 50X1-HUM

4. Electrified Fence

[redacted] an unelectrified fence, in the area near CIMBALU, which was about 500 m long, very primitive in construction, and consisting of a single strand of barbed wire supported by wooden pickets. [redacted] this fence was here because the road at this point was only about 10 m from the border. 50X1-HUM

5. Mines and Flares

[redacted] no mines, flares, or trip wires were located in this restricted zone, [redacted] it would be too dangerous to use these types of border obstacles because of the large number of visitors in this area. 50X1-HUM 50X1-HUM

6. Dragon Teeth and Bunkers

[redacted] some old prewar bunkers overgrown with vegetation scattered throughout the area. [redacted] they were not being used [redacted] perhaps the border guards used them for shelter during inclement weather. 50X1-HUM 50X1-HUM

7. Plowed Strip

These strips, about 10 m wide, were inside the geographical border and were continuous along the entire border. They were used to detect footprints of anyone crossing into East Germany. [redacted] in 1956 members of the border guard came to the Spolek Chemical Combine in USTI NAD LABEM and requested a chemical to destroy all vegetation on these plowed strips. The Spolek Chemical Combine did not possess such a chemical and therefore could not fulfill the request. 50X1-HUM

8. Entering the Border Area

All vehicles upon arriving at the restricted zone of the border area came under the control of the border guards. At this point vehicles were given a brief inspection and the documents of the individuals were checked. After this preliminary check, vehicles were allowed to proceed to the border check point. It was mandatory for the driver to have in his possession a title for the vehicle and a travel permit showing his destination and the length of his stay. All other passengers in the vehicle were required to show travel permits.

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9. Checking Procedure for Vehicles and Occupants

Upon reaching a border check point all the vehicles were stopped before the barrier and the occupants were required to dismount. All baggage was then inspected, the occupants were required to declare all their valuables and currency, and travel permits were checked and stamped.

the amount of currency allowed for Czechoslovaks visiting East Germany was sufficient

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Most of the time enough was left after paying for necessary expenses to buy a watch, camera, or binoculars, which were much cheaper in East Germany than in Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovaks never missed the opportunity to obtain such items and smuggle them back into Czechoslovakia. There were no restrictions on the amount of food and clothing taken across the border as long as the persons stated it was for their own use and not for barter. This checking procedure was followed by both the Czechoslovaks and the East Germans at all established check points.

10. Border Guard Uniform and Insignia

The border guard winter uniform was similar to that of the army. The material was heavy olive drab wool. The uniform consisted of a choke collar type blouse, long pants tucked into black boots, an overseas cap, and an overcoat. The insignia consisted of a green collar tab with the bronze head of a dog. The shoulderboards were green with red piping. The belt buckle had the imprint of the Czech lion.

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11. Border Guard Weapons and Equipment

the border guards were armed with either rifles or submachineguns. These weapons had carrying straps and were slung over the shoulder. Most border guards also carried binoculars. They also wore a black leather belt with two ammunition pouches.

12. Location of Czechoslovak Border Guard Troops and Other Installations

Following is a list of the towns and villages that had border guards living in permanent-type buildings.

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a. In ČESKÝ JIRETIM, one old brick farmhouse was occupied by border guards. The village was sparsely populated.

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b. In FLAJS, two brick buildings of unrecalled size were occupied by border guards.

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c. In MOLDAVA, one small brick building was occupied by border guards.

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d. In CIMBALO, there was a new legal crossing point for vehicular traffic into East Germany, with a customhouse for all persons crossing the border. A drop bar across the road was manually operated by two border guards. Two large brick buildings near the customhouse were occupied by border guards. The East Germans also had a customhouse and a drop bar on their side. About 20 m separated the two customhouses.

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e. In FOJTOVICE, one old brick building was occupied by border guards. The bus line from TEPLICE terminated at this point. A bus returned to TEPLICE every two hours. In HABARTICE, an old brick building was occupied by border guards.

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f. In ADOLFOV, two brick buildings were occupied by border guards. A few civilians also lived in this area, and there was a large tourist lodge providing overnight accommodations.

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g. In SCHONWALD, two small brick buildings were occupied by border guards. The road into East Germany was closed and barricaded. One very high observation tower stood here on a hill; it was much higher than the other towers seen along the border. The terrain in this area was mostly pasture for cattle.

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h. In BOMOSUDOV, a small villa was occupied by border guards and an army administration office (vojenská posádková správa).

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i. In UNČÍN was a school for Marxist-Leninist training (MLP-Marx Leninská Příprava), which was under the direction of the Czechoslovak Communist Party Political Section. This school had once been a health center for miners and their families. Students from China, Viet Nam and North Korea, and negroes studied all aspects of Communism there. They were required to learn to speak Russian as a common language in order to understand each other. This school had been in operation since 1954. Negroes were first observed there in 1956. The building that housed this school was three stories high and constructed of brick and cement. A brick wall, two meters high, surrounded the entire area. I obtained this information from a café owner while having lunch in UNČÍN.

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j. In PŘEHOVICE was a former schoolhouse that was occupied by border guards. The road leading to this billet was closed to all vehicles.

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k. In RAJEK were several brick buildings occupied by border guards. All the former occupants had been moved out.

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Some Czechoslovaks had used this town as a jumping-off place to escape to East Germany, so all the occupants were moved out to curtail this activity.

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l. In TISA was an old farmhouse occupied by border guards.

m. In ŠUMEN was a large villa occupied by border guards.

an area near ŠUMEN under development for uranium. See Annex C, Point 5. The entire area was surrounded by a 1 1/2 m high, 3-strand, barbed-wire fence, supported by wooden posts. Signs approximately 50 x 50 cm were posted in the area with the following inscription: "Vstup Zakázan" (Entry Forbidden).

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n. In MAXICKY, a two-story brick building was occupied by border guards. [REDACTED]

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o. In HRENSKO, an estimated company of border guards was stationed in several brick buildings. The road on the west side of the Elbe River, which forms the border here for about 1 1/2 km [REDACTED], was closed and blocked. Train passengers were all checked at PODMOKLY, which was about 4 km south of HRENSKO. [REDACTED]

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13. Barge Terminal at DEČÍN

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At DEČÍN, [REDACTED] a barge terminal from across the Elbe River [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] two 4-story stucco buildings, about 100 m long; 4 large cranes running on rails, used to load and unload barges; and 3 smaller self-propelled cranes. [REDACTED] it was possible to transfer goods from barge to train or truck, and vice versa, at this point.

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COMMENT

1. The following information was inadvertently omitted: Between 1954 and 1958, [REDACTED] construction of [REDACTED] a dam that would be used to establish a water reservoir. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] the project was begun in 1952 and was scheduled for completion in 1960. Because this area was isolated, it was very difficult to obtain sufficient labor for this dam and many delays were experienced. A new macadam road about 8 m wide was constructed between the dam and a road just north of FLAJE. This road was utilized by trucks to transport supplies and equipment to the construction site.

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